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From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
Sent: Fri 3/9/2018 6:06:06 PM
Subject: Playbook Power Briefing, presented by UnitedHealth Group: Trump caps off wild week with huge jobs report, announcement that he'll sit down with North Korean leader

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Today's Playbook Power Briefing presented by UnitedHealth Group

By ANNA PALMER (anna@politico.com; [@apalmerdc](#)), JAKE SHERMAN (sherman@politico.com; [@JakeSherman](#)), DANIEL LIPPMAN (daniel@politico.com; [@dlippman](#)) and ZACH MONTELLARO (zmontellaro@politico.com; [@ZachMontellaro](#))

BULLETIN -- WSJ: "Lloyd Blankfein Prepares to Exit Goldman Sachs as Soon as Year's End," by Liz Hoffman and Joann Lublin. <http://on.wsj.com/2DelbWG>

THE SECOND-ANNUAL PLAYBOOK POOL ... Try to beat Jake, who thinks he knows everything about college basketball. Playbookers from around the country are already in -- including lots of elected officials and other VIPs. So far two governors have signed up, as has a certain high-profile press secretary.

PRIZES include Apple Watches, AirPods, GoPros, Google Homek, Snapchat Spectacles and more. **CHOOSE YOUR BRACKET** Sunday, after Selection Sunday -- if you're in Austin, shoot us a note. **LOOK FOR** Playbook basketballs on the Hill next week. **Get in the game** <http://bit.ly/2GahfsZ>

INTERESTING JOE BIDEN CANDID SHOT -- HERE IS BIDEN speaking with what our tipster said was a homeless man outside the Georgetown movie theater last night on K Street. Biden went to a movie at the AMC with his granddaughter who was in town visiting friends. <http://bit.ly/2G945MT>

Good Friday afternoon.

WHIPLASH ALERT -- THIS ALL HAPPENED THIS WEEK: Sam Nunberg went on television, said he would not turn over emails to the special prosecutor and would not speak to a grand jury. He decided to do both. ... Texans voted in party primaries, and the candidate the DCCC dropped oppo on made it to the run off.

... THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE campaigned against President Donald Trump's tariffs, and Trump levied them anyway. Stormy Daniels, a porn star, sued the president, and her lawyer said on NBC's "Today Show" that she had a romantic relationship with Trump and was paid to keep quiet. Stormy's lawyer tweeted a photo of her and Anderson Cooper after Cooper interviewed her.

... GARY COHN quit. Trump said Cohn would go make a few hundred million dollars and come back to work at the White House. The Israeli prime minister was in D.C. (he might be indicted). Maggie Haberman and Mike Schmidt of the Times reported that Trump had been quizzing people who spoke to the special counsel.

JUST POSTED -- NBC'S SARAH FITZPATRICK and TRACY CONNOR: "Michael Cohen Used Trump Organization Email in Stormy Daniels Arrangements": "President Donald Trump's personal attorney used his Trump Organization email while arranging to transfer money into an account at a Manhattan bank before he wired \$130,000 to adult film star Stormy Daniels to buy her silence.

"The lawyer, Michael Cohen, also regularly used the same email account during 2016 negotiations with the actress - whose legal name is Stephanie Clifford - before she signed a nondisclosure agreement, a source familiar with the discussions told NBC News. And Clifford's attorney at the time addressed correspondence to Cohen in his capacity at the Trump Organization and as 'Special Counsel to Donald J. Trump," the source said. <http://nbcnews.to/2Hn3zdx>

STRONG JOB REPORT -- Ian Kullgren: "The Labor Department reported 313,000 new jobs in February, the largest single-month gain of Donald Trump's presidency. The numbers represent a leap from from January's 239,000 new jobs, lending credence to Republican claims that last year's tax reform bill would jump-start the economy. It was the largest single-month gain since July 2016, when the economy added 325,000 new jobs. ...

"But while U.S. employment continued to grow at a steady clip, the wage recovery many experts anticipated when January's jobs report showed 2.9 percent growth in average hourly earnings over the previous year seemed less secure. That figure grew 2.6 percent in February, and the January wage growth number was adjusted slightly downward to 2.8 percent." <http://politi.co/2FuXF9I>

THE PULLBACK -- AMAZING MORNING FOR TRUMP: North Korea news. Strong job report. **IN THE BACKGROUND:** Stormy Daniels. Tariff issues with Congress.

WORTH READING -- ANDREA MITCHELL on the risks and rewards of the North Korea meeting <http://bzfd.it/2Fw86dl>

MIDDLE EAST PEACE UPDATE ... JASON GREENBLATT in WaPo: **"Does Hamas have the courage to admit failure?":** "The Palestinians of Gaza have the opportunity to reject the failed policies of Hamas and turn toward a legitimate governing body that invests in them wisely and encourages their prosperity. Of course, it will take time to get there -- a great deal of time -- but we should start this journey today. It is a journey so critical to all of the children of Israelis, Palestinians (those in Gaza and the West Bank), Egyptians and beyond." <http://wapo.st/2IbASBI>

***** **A message from UnitedHealth Group: Reducing out-of-pocket costs for brand drugs.** We're making our fully insured members in group health plans - seven million people - eligible for direct, out-of-pocket savings from brand drug rebates. It's a step toward more affordable prescription drugs. [Learn more.](#) *****

TRUMP INC. -- "One Hotel in Panama, but Two Competing Websites (and a Single Mention of Trump)," by NYT's Ben Protess and Steve Eder: "Travelers trying to book a stay at the Trump International Hotel & Tower Panama on Thursday found no rooms available on TrumpHotels.com. But the website for the Bahia Grand Panama had several luxurious options, at the very same oceanfront hotel.

"The dueling websites -- and their conflicting occupancy information -- are the latest twist in the oft-bizarre battle between President Trump's family business and the majority owner of the Panama City property, who has spent months trying to oust the Trumps as both the managers and the branders of the hotel." <http://nyti.ms/2p2bgi1>

IN THE AGENCIES -- "'It's killing the agency': Ugly power struggle paralyzes Trump's plan to fix veterans' care," by WaPo's Lisa Rein: "Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin is managing the government's second-largest bureaucracy from a fortified bunker atop the agency's Washington headquarters.

"He has canceled the morning meetings once attended by several of President Trump's political appointees --

members of his senior management team -- gathering instead with aides he trusts not to miscast his remarks. Access to Shulkin's 10th-floor executive suite was recently revoked for several people he has accused of lobbying the White House to oust him. He and his public-affairs chief have not spoken in weeks.

"And in a sign of how deeply the secretary's trust in his senior staff has eroded, an armed guard now stands outside his office." <http://wapo.st/2Fv7yo6>

-- **"Political Pressure and Confusion Marked Interior's Reassignment of Career Execs, Internal Docs Show,"** by Government Executive's Eric Katz <http://bit.ly/2FvdA8f>

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS -- "There's A Serious Divide Over Gun Policy Between Gun Owners Who Are And Aren't NRA Members," by BuzzFeed's Matt Berman and Paul McLeod: "Approximately 76% of gun owners who are not members of the NRA said they'd support raising the minimum age for buying a high-capacity semi-automatic rifle like an AR-15 from 18 to 21. That proposal even has substantial backing among gun-owning NRA members: 53% support it, with only 25% strongly opposed.

"But while raising the legal age for ownership for all firearms from 18 to 21 has support from 64% of gun owners who aren't NRA members, just 40% of NRA-member gun owners would back such a plan. There's also a significant split on support for banning the AR-15 nationwide: 45% of gun owners who aren't NRA members support a ban, compared to only 24% of gun owners who are members." <http://bzfd.it/2Fw86dl>

MAN OF THE HOUR -- "Wilbur Ross's Star Rises as Trump Imposes Tariffs," by WSJ's Ted Mann, Bob Tita and Maureen Farrell: "Mr. Ross, 80 years old, has been on something of a victory lap after what had been a rocky first year in the administration, according to the former associate and people familiar with Mr. Ross's position in the administration.

"But that followed months in which Mr. Trump had grown frustrated with Mr. Ross, angered that the commerce secretary was gaining notoriety from press reports that he had overstated his personal wealth and other incidents, including a propensity to nod off in meetings. Mr. Ross has also at times been an idiosyncratic spokesman for the president." <http://on.wsj.com/2FtzGYA>

BUILD THAT WALL? -- "House Intel Committee plan to build physical wall is shelved," by CBS News' Olivia Gazis: "A plan put forward by Republicans on the House Intelligence Committee to build a physical wall to separate the staffs of the two parties has been put on hold, multiple committee sources tell CBS News, reviving hopes that the committee may regain -- or at least retain -- some of its bipartisan tradition." <http://cbsn.ws/2G9AeUJ>

MEDIAWATCH -- CONGRATS to POLITICO's Adam Behsudi, Lorraine Woellert and M. Scott Mahaskey on winning awards from the Society of American Business Editors and Writers. **Full list of winners** <http://bit.ly/2Gekv73>

BUSINESS BURST -- "Qualcomm Names New Chairman as Broadcom Pushes Case for Takeover," by WSJ's Allison Prang and Cara Lombardo: "Broadcom sent a letter to members of Congress defending its \$117 billion hostile takeover of chip maker Qualcomm, one of several steps Broadcom has taken to win support for its proposed deal. Broadcom also pledged to not sell 'any critical national security assets to any foreign companies.' ... Qualcomm has rejected Broadcom's advances, consistently noting that a national-security review as a potential stumbling block to a deal." <http://on.wsj.com/2FEfoR2> ... **The letter** <http://politi.co/2GaPUHd>

WHAT GERRIT LANSING IS READING -- "Steve Scalise Will Drop the Puck at the Congressional Hockey Challenge," by Washingtonian's Kim Olsen: <http://bit.ly/2oVIEc2>

SPOTTED -- Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao flying coach on a flight this morning from DCA to Jacksonville. ... Roger Stone flying Fort Lauderdale to DCA Friday morning.

OUT AND ABOUT -- Pool report: "A book party was held for 'Nine Irish Lives,' a collection of stories about the 'fighters, thinkers and artists who helped build America' at the Irish ambassador's home in Kalorama last night. The book includes nine tales written by Pierce Brosnan, Terry Golway, Tom Hayden, Kathleen Hill, Mary Jordan and Kevin Sullivan, Jill McDonough, Michael Moore, Rosie O'Donnell and Mark Shriver. The book was edited by Mark Bailey. Guests drank Irish whiskey and had blood pudding while several of the authors spoke -- and phones buzzed with news that Trump planned to meet with North Korea leader Kim Jong-un." **\$14.72 on Amazon** <http://amzn.to/2FqKHOn>

SPOTTED: Irish Ambassador Dan Mulhall, Greta van Susteren, Sally Quinn, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Rory Kennedy, Susan Brophy, Katharine Weymouth, Sari Horwitz and Bill Schultz, Philip Rucker, Josh Dawsey.

SPOTTED at Perkin Coie's annual political law reception last night at the National Archives: Marc Elias, Patrick McHugh, David Turner, Devan Barber, Stephanie Nielsen, Brian Krebs, Julia Ager, Marissa Padilla, Matt Canter, Chris Harris, Josh Schwerin, Katie Dropkin and Lauren Dillon.

TRANSITIONS -- Katie Beck Wojcik has been named managing editor of POLITICO Focus, POLITICO's in-house brand studio. She was previously SVP at the Podesta Group and helped launch Cogent Strategies.

ENGAGED -- Charlie Liebschutz, VP at SRCPmedia and a John McCain 2008 alum, proposed to **Maggie Moore**, associate at the lobbying firm Sternhell Group. "We got engaged Monday evening on Isla Holbox, Mexico. We met where any good political couple should meet...Bullfeathers (thanks to a rain-delayed Nats game)." **Instapic** <http://bit.ly/2G9BreI>

WELCOME TO THE WORLD -- Jen Gilbreath Adler, communications director for the Democrats on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and **Adam Adler**, counsel at Georgetown University, welcomed Henry Vaughn Adler. **Pic** <http://bit.ly/2tkCK7V>

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